1: Radcliffe-Brown E-5 (1906-1908)1922
AZ2 Andamans AZ2

X 182 302 764 realise that he has deserved their regard. So, to express their regard for the dead man they paint the inanimate body. Hence it is that the greater the esteem in which the dead man or woman is held, the greater is the care bestowed on the last painting.

We may conclude therefore that the painting of the body with white clay and the wearing of ornaments of *Dentalium* shell is a rite or ceremony by which the value of the individual to the society is expressed on appropriate occasions. We shall find confirmation of this later in the chapter.

X 182 301 535 832 Before passing on to consider the meaning of other methods of decorating the body there is one matter that is worthy of mention. It is often assumed or stated that both personal ornament and dancing, amongst uncivilised peoples, are connected with sexual emotion. It is, of course, extremely difficult to disprove a statement of this sort. So far as the Andamanese are concerned I was unable to find any trace whatever of a definitely sexual element in either their dances or their personal adornment. It may be recalled that both men and women wear exactly the same ornaments on ceremonial occasions, and this is to some extent evidence that such have no sexual value. It is possible that some observers might see in the dance of the women (which is only performed on rare occasions) a suggestion of something of a sexual nature. I was unable to find that the natives themselves consider that there is anything suggestive of sex in either the dance of the men or that of the women. If it were true that the most important feature of the dance was that it appealed in some way to sexual feelings it is difficult to see how we are to explain the different occasions on which dancing takes place, as before a fight, at the end of mourning, etc., whereas these are adequately accounted for by the hypothesis that the dance is a method of expressing the unity and harmony of the society. Similarly the explanation of personal ornament as being connected with sexual feeling would fail to account for the occasions on which it is regarded as obligatory. There is therefore, I believe, no special connection between the dancing and personal ornament of the Andamanese and sexual feeling. It would still be possible to hold that there is a general

1: Radcliffe-Brown E-5 (1906-1908)1922
AZ2 Andamans AZ2

connection of great importance between the affective dispositions underlying these and other customs and the complex affective disposition that we call the sex instinct. The nature of that connection, important as it is, lies outside the scope of this work.

I remarked above that the explanation which I have given of the meaning of personal ornament does not apply to all the objects that the Andaman Islanders wear on their body, but only to certain of them. If an Andaman Islander be asked why he paints himself with white clay, or why he wears a belt or necklace of *Dentalium* shell he replies that he does so in order to look well; but if he be asked why he wears a string of human bones round his head or neck or waist, he gives quite a different answer, to the effect that he does so in order to protect himself from dangers of a special kind. According to circumstances he will say either that he is wearing the bones to cure himself of illness, or else that he wears them as a protection against spirits. Thus while some things are worn on the body in order to improve the personal appearance, and consequently, as explained above, to give the individual a sense of his own value, others are worn because they are believed to have a protective power, and thereby arouse in the person a sense of security. Exactly the some sort of protective power is attributed to things that cannot be worn on the body, such as fire, and it will therefore be convenient to consider together all the things that afford this kind of protection, whether they can be worn on the body or not.

The interpretation here offered is that the customs connected with this belief in the protective power of objects of various kinds are means by which is expressed and thereby maintained at the necessary degree of energy a very important social sentiment, which, for lack of a better term, I shall call the sentiment of dependence. In such a primitive society as that of the Andamans one of the most powerful means of maintaining the cohesion of the society and of enforcing that conformity to custom and tradition without which social life is impossible, is the recognition by the individual that for his security and well-being he depends entirely upon the society. Now for the Andaman Islander the society is not sufficiently concrete and particular

6: Cipriani E-5 (1951-1953)1961 AZ2 Andamans AZ2
Onge

and therefore dangerous to offend by cooking them. Luckily they accepted fish of almost every description, and vegetables. To convince them of our good intentions concerning their food, at Port Blair an Onge observer was stationed permanently near the kitchen to watch the preparation of meals. Nevertheless, within a few days all 30 Onge fell ill as a consequence of the different food and climate. In their island they sleep, completely naked and uncovered, lying directly on beds made of rough branches. Their only precaution, as I mentioned before, is to keep a fire permanently burning close to the bed. This was not feasible in the rooms with wooden floors that were provided for them in Port Blair, and blankets did not avail. So the 30 Onge developed a fever and we were obliged to take them urgently back to Little Andaman, where they promptly recovered. The incident gave me a further opportunity to observe the curative methods of the Onge.

With regard to their care to avoid illness from food, I must point out the fact that misleading information has been published on the subject even in reputed papers on the Andamans. I will discuss them in my Onge book, but I wish here to briefly stress a few points : the Onge, and the present residual coastal or forest Andamanese, refuse to eat – besides birds and fish such as shark, ray, eel or muraenae – some other animals such as paradoxurus, bats, rats, varanus and snakes. The contrary is affirmed in those papers. To quote the well-known book by A. R. RADCLIFFE-BROWN ("The Andaman Islanders", pp. 37, 91 and 389), all Andaman Islanders, including the Onge, consider the above-mentioned species edible. Varanus is supposed to be acceptable for its lustful habits that make of it an aphrodisiac. My direct and protracted experience both in Little and in Great Andaman compels me to state that such information is false. It is true, however, that the Andaman Islanders believe they acquire some of the properties of their devoured victims. This occurs only if the animals are cut up alive. Therefore turtles, pigs and dugongs are cruelly sectioned while still alive, and the Onge also believe that their health and energy profit by it. Cannibalism may be founded on such beliefs, but it is completely unknown to Andaman Islanders of all times and places. Young sucking-pigs are avoided, as food, by men, and even withheld from the dogs ; but the Onge are partial to other things which, in our opinion, are far worse : crickets, and the fat larvae of coleoptera that collect in tree trunks.

Without giving here a full list of the foods that are considered harmful or curative, I shall add just a few remarks on the subject. The healthiest, as well as the tastiest part of the pig is supposed to be the kidney and its surrounding fat. It is offered to old or distinguished people, as a sign of favour. As I helped the Onge, as much as possible, with gifts of tools and medicines, they found it complimentary to name me after their favorite titbit, intending thereby to honour me as a friend and healer. By such a name I came to be known in Little Andaman, and this made my work easier. In the Onge language the word for kidney fat is *cue-changhêghê* ; I was delighted with it, for it proclaimed the high esteem I was held in by my Onge friends.

Foods considered healthy by the Onge include honey, yams, several succulent roots and the fat of turtle and dugong. Pteropus, a giant bat very

6: Cipriani E-5 (1951-1953)1961 AZ2 Andamans AZ2
Onge

841 171 resembling these practices in any other part of the world. Never hitherto described, they should be carefully considered. This would require a lengthy description, for which there is no space here. We may recall that menstruating Onge women are allowed to circulate freely at all times. An interesting detail [751] is that the *naquinēghē* of first menstruations are worn by relations around their neck as having health-giving properties. The women, as we know, use special 841 soft, long leaves, collected for them by their husbands, as absorbents. They [824] are the leaves of Myristica longifolia or of Tretanthera lanceofolia both species serving the purpose. They are applied under the *naquinēghē* and drawn back between the legs to be secured above the buttocks. – Sexual intercourse is [834] forbidden during the menstrual period even by the Onge : illness – a swelling [753] of the arms or legs – would follow. A curious theory about the reason for menstruation in very young girls is that it is a result of previous sexual contacts stimulated by nose rubbing – the Onge substitute for kissing. They ignore the 892 unhygienic practice of kissing with the lips, and never even kiss their children. Only nose rubbing is practiced. The anatomical structure of the Onge nose, which almost totally lacks nasal bones and is very fleshy, may explain this transference of sensation from nearby regions, i. e. the lips.

844 Births take place in the forest and are surrounded by no hygienic precautions or disinfection as conceived by us. Clay is applied to stem puerperal bleeding, without provoking infection. The only assistant is the pregnant woman's husband, and sometimes one or two old women. Their ability equals that of a herdsman delivering his goat of a kid. No inconvenience arises, in either instance, from lack of precautions. – The tiny, tender and graceful bodies [751] of Onge infants are smeared with ochre and light-coloured clay for hygienic purposes. This is done immediately after birth, and affords some protection against the teeming legions of mosquitos and ticks that plague Little Andaman. The infant is never washed in water, not even at the very moment of birth. The placenta is buried 30 or 40 cms deep, under the bed of naked branches upon which the mother delivered her baby.

842 143 An argument that deserves much attention concerns the possible link between lack of hygiene and sterility among the Onge. A vast number of married couples have no offspring, thereby threatening their group with extinction. Consanguinity could be given as a cause : let us examine it. No doubt the Onge are related to each other as a consequence of long interbreeding in their island with no foreigners admitted. These conditions afford an ideal field for studying the effects of endogamy on man. Nowhere in the world, as far as I know, are a people so isolated as in Little Andaman. Inbreeding has existed at 100 % ever since remote times. In other words, the Onge would seem to be the most highly inbred human population known up to the present. Could this fact alone, aside from unhealthy habits, explain their present widespread sterility ? Special 174 studies on the subject should be undertaken, keeping in mind that the Onge have certainly inhabited Little Andaman for thousands of years, on the evidence of my excavations in their kitchen-middens.

11: Cipriani E-3 (1951-1955) 1966 AZ2 Andamans AZ2
Onges

men naturally predisposed to the abnormality is enhanced by the fact that the youngest and most attractive women are invariably monopolized by the older men. So prevalent, indeed, is homosexuality that one is obliged to regard it as a biological, and not as a social or psychological abnormality. It is not, therefore, surprising to find that kissing is unknown; sexual excitement is aroused instead by nose-rubbing.

None of the Onges have any sense of modesty. This is partly the result of circumstances; privacy is impossible in the communal life of the group. This is in marked contrast to the comical dignity assumed during the last few years by the remaining Arioto women. The government authorities decreed that they should be clothed, and they immediately became so prudish that they refuse to bare so much as an arm, and they thus present a considerable problem to the anthropologist. Their menfolk, however, are clearly delighted with this sudden modesty which was to me a somewhat pathetic parody, and a further example of Andamanese childish-

[The remainder of this sentence has been left incomplete in the original text.--Analyst]

11: Cipriani E-3 (1951-1955) 1966 AZ2 Andamans AZ2

head ornaments and religious ceremonies. In Oceania there is, too, the habit of changing personal names from time to time so prevalent among the Onges, and the existence of actual linguistic connections between Nicobarese, Andamanese, Semang, Aetà and peoples of Oceania have been demonstrated by experts.

Any differences which exist today are the result of centuries of contact with other peoples which the Semang and Aetà have experienced, unlike the Andamanese, who thus represent today the true Negritos. While life generally has changed somewhat over the centuries for the Semang and Aetà, certain typical facets of their culture have remained unaltered. Ritual cutting and distributing of game, the use of the arrow harpoon (always unfeathered) and the simple Onge-Negrito bow are still the same, despite the fact that the three groups have been separated for a very long time. Even the very absence of defensive weapons is a common feature; admittedly outside the Andamans arrows are poisoned and some may be feathered, but this is a recent and imitative innovation which is not found among the Andamanese, by virtue of their constant isolation. The persistence among the Onges of the simple bow tends to support the idea of Little Andaman as the first stage in the northward spread of the Negritos after they reached the island from Sumatra via the Nicobars. In Malacca the Semang have retained the same bow, as have the Aetà in the Philippines.

Among what may be termed similarities of physical habits is nose-rubbing as a sign of affection, found in the Andamans, in Oceania, and parts of Papuasia and Melanesia. In all these areas there is the same belief that pregnancy is due to entry of a spirit into the body, and the same habit of suckling children for as long as four years. Similar too throughout the area are the methods of 'curing' disease, such as smearing with ochre and heavy massage carried out beside a fire, swallowing of balls of ochre, and the 'smoking' of wounds, smeared with a mixture of ochre and honey. As protection from the sun or the rains (especially for the young children) crude umbrellas are made from giant palm leaves.

There are no prayers or propitiatory sacrifices to ensure health and well being, but there is throughout the area the same concept of mysterious forces to be feared, evaded, or let loose against enemies – never loved. Generally they are thought of in terms of spirits, usually active at night. There is some divergence in the